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IICP Safeguarding Policy

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose

(1) This policy sets out the principles and responsibilities of all members of the IICP College community in relation to the protecting of individuals in particular children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

2. Scope

To whom does the policy apply?

(2) This is an overarching policy that sets out the College's approach to safeguarding. It applies to all safeguarding responsibilities and practises undertaken by Staff, Faculty, Adjunct Faculty, students and third parties.

In what situations does the policy apply?

(3) This policy applies to all situations where the College has a duty to safeguard individuals, including during teaching, research, placements, fieldwork, online activities, events and any interactions involving students, staff or third parties.

3. Definitions:

(4) Child: According to the Child Care Act 1991, a child is defined as any person under the age of 18 years, except for individuals who are or have been married.

(5) Vulnerable Adult: A vulnerable adult is an individual aged 18 or over who may have a reduced capacity to protect themselves from harm, abuse, or exploitation, or to report such harm or exploitation. This reduced capacity can result from physical disabilities, intellectual impairments, mental health conditions, or other factors that limit their ability to safeguard their own wellbeing.

(6) Young person: An individual who has reached 16 years of age or the school leaving age but is less than 18 years old.

(7) Abuse: Refers to any action or failure to act, that deliberately or unintentionally causes harm injury or distress to an individual. It usually takes 4 forms: sexual physical neglect and financially. Abuse violates a person's rights and undermines their dignity safety and wellbeing.

(8) Designated Liaison Person (DLP): The person selected by IICP College to act as a resource to any staff member, volunteer or student who may have safeguarding concerns. The DLP ensures that all procedures are followed promptly and in a sensitive manner.

(9) Management: The effective oversight coordination and implementation of policies, procedures and practises to protect individuals from harm. It involves ensuring that safeguarding responsibilities are assigned, risks are assessed, staff are properly trained and compliance with legal and ethical standards are maintained throughout the College.

(10) Mandated Person: A professional who, because of their qualifications, training or role is considered in a key position to identify and report child/ vulnerable adults protection concerns according to the Children First Act 2015.

SECTION 2 CONTEXT

1. Legal or Regulatory Context

(11) The College has safeguarding responsibilities under various legislation and national guidance including:

- (a) Children First Act 2015
- (b) National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012–2016
- (c) Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012
- (d) Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse – HSE Policy (2014)
- (e) Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015
- (f) Data Protection Act 2018 / GDPR
- (g) Higher Education Authority (HEA) Framework on Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment (2021)
- (h) Child Care Act 1991

2. Institutional Responsibility

(12) IICP College is committed to ensuring a proactive and responsive safeguarding culture. We ensure all staff are trained, risk is assessed and systems are in place to respond and manage safeguarding concerns effectively.

3. Risk areas

(13) This policy applies to

- (a) Students who are under 18 or vulnerable adults.
- (b) Student placements, work experience, or internships.
- (c) One-to-one interactions between staff and students.
- (d) Online learning environments and digital communication.

SECTION 3- POLICY STATEMENT

1. Roles and Responsibilities:

(14) This policy ensures that the college will nominate a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) who will oversee the implementation of all procedures and policy. The DLP is currently the Registrar.

(15) The College will appoint two Deputy Designated Liaison Persons. These individuals will provide support and act in the DLPs absence.

(16) If a staff member, volunteer, or student is classified as a Mandated Person under the Children First Act 2015, they are legally required to report any concerns regarding the welfare of a child to the Child and Family Agency (Tusla). This report may be made directly by the Mandated Person or in collaboration with IICP Colleges Designated Liaison Person (DLP). In either case, the DLP should be informed of any report that is submitted.

(17) Targeted safeguarding training will be provided to all IICP College staff, volunteers, and students who work with, or have responsibility for, children young people or vulnerable adults. This training will equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to make informed decisions and respond confidently to protection concerns. Staff or volunteers who are newly assigned or transferred into such roles will also receive the appropriate safeguarding training before undertaking their duties.

2. Reporting and Responding to Concerns:

(18) The College is committed to providing clear accessible and confidential mechanisms for reporting safeguarding concerns. All safeguarding concerns, whether disclosed directly or suspected will be reported promptly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of individuals involved.

(19) To support this commitment the college will:

- (a) Provide confidential and accessible reporting mechanisms.
- (b) Ensure that all staff, students, and stakeholders are regularly informed about how to recognise safeguarding concerns and how to report them through induction, training, and awareness campaigns.
- (c) Maintain a central and secure system for logging and tracking all safeguarding concerns, ensuring timely follow-up and accurate record-keeping in compliance with data protection requirements.
- (d) Ensure that individuals who raise safeguarding concerns are protected from victimisation or retaliation and are supported throughout the process.

(20) The DLP will assess risk and if appropriate will refer the situation to external agencies (Tusla, An Garda Siochana).

(21) To maximise the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults in IICP College and other external institutions staff students and third parties may engage with during research activities, placement and institutional activities. The following safeguarding measures are mandatory.

- (a) Students on programmes with placement components must be Garda vetted on admission.
- (b) Students on programmes with placement components must complete the TUSLA eLearning programme in advance of placement.
- (c) Students and staff partaking or completing research that involves children, young people or vulnerable adults must be Garda vetted.
- (d) Staff members who supervise or support student placements must be Garda vetted.
- (e) Staff members who supervise, or support student placements must complete the TUSLA eLearning programme in advance of placement
- (f) Students are required to receive safeguarding input in advance of commencing placements and research.
- (g) All staff should receive annual safeguarding training.

3. Policy Monitoring:

(22) This policy is reviewed annually by the DLP and approved by the Academic Council. Feedback from stakeholders and lessons learned from safeguarding incidents are used to inform updates.